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PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

AN ANALYSIS OF ATTITUDES TOWARD SPANISH AS EXPRESSED IN *US ENGLISH Update*

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ABSTRACT. An analysis of the content of the first ten years of the primary publication of the US ENGLISH organization, *US ENGLISH Update*, reveals that the main focus of the group is restriction of use of the Spanish language in the United States. This policy objective has its roots in language attitudes based on impressions and heresay. US ENGLISH asserts that many US Spanish-speakers are not willing to learn English, for which bilingual education is singled out as a significant cause. US ENGLISH claims to support only constituency- and state-benefit-based language policies, but the ulterior goal that emerges is the elimination of ad hoc clientele-based language policy that serves Spanish-speakers of limited English proficiency. It is clear that, ultimately, some individuals associated with the organization wish to reduce the public use of Spanish, since that verbal behavior is what has lead them to become anxious about the status of English.¹

INTRODUCTION. *US ENGLISH Update*, the official newsletter of US ENGLISH, a not-for-profit educational and lobbying concern, completed its tenth year of publication in 1993.² The organization's first decade was one of spectacular success. Founded by US Senator S. I. Hayakawa in 1983 (US ENGLISH 1991a: 4), US ENGLISH ten years later claimed more than 500,000 among its ranks (US

¹This article is a revised and updated version of the Presidential Address to the Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Association of the Southwest, October 23, 1993, Arlington, Texas. The author wishes to thank the reviewers of drafts of this work for their thorough and constructive comments.

²The US ENGLISH newsletter was published under the name of *Update* until 1988, when the name was changed to *US ENGLISH Update*. In this article, the latter title is used in general reference to the newsletter. In the references section, the exact title is indicated as appropriate.

ENGLISH 1993b:6), and its lobbying arm has aided several highly successful state movements to make English the official language.

The efforts of US ENGLISH to safeguard the status of the most powerful language in the world may be curious to some, but three developments that began during the seventies and have continued into the nineties help to explain why the official English movement originated and still has at the very least hundreds of thousands of supporters. First and foremost is the fact that the Spanish-speaking proportion of the United States population has increased dramatically over the last twenty years. Secondly, during that same period bilingual education has brought significant changes to the public schools, and Spanish-language advocates have made statements perceived by some to threaten the hegemony of English. Finally, the significant ideological shift at the end of the seventies that led to the Reagan-Bush victories provided the ideal environment for the development of a more conservative language policy.

US ENGLISH disavows ties with a particular political party, defining itself as "a national, non-profit, non-partisan membership organization, founded in 1983 to defend the public interest in the growing debate on bilingualism and biculturalism" (US ENGLISH 1985o:4). Membership is open to "all who believe that English is, and ever must remain, the only official language of the people of the United States" (US ENGLISH 1985o:4). US ENGLISH continues to claim to be non-partisan, but it is at least partly a political entity, evidence of which appears in *Update*, where US ENGLISH describes itself as a "membership organization . . . made up of two arms: US ENGLISH Foundation . . . a non-profit . . . educational organization . . . [and] US ENGLISH, Inc., . . . a . . . non-profit lobbying organization . . ." (US ENGLISH 1991b:8). Since US ENGLISH is at least partly political in nature, the objectivity of its representation of language-related issues is questionable. Indeed, previous research has shown that both politicians and US ENGLISH have distorted facts when whipping up support for official English (Donahue 1985:100; Fishman 1988:131; Gynan 1987:186; Macedo 1991:9). Specifically, what the present study will show is that in the pages of its newsletter, US ENGLISH grossly distorts the issue of Spanish language maintenance, misrepresents the complexities of the arguments underlying the debate over bilingual education, and disingenuously advocates an extremist language plan that far from being restricted to enactment of language policy that strengthens symbolic and governmental functions of English, seeks to limit severely the use of Spanish in a wide range of public settings. This agenda can be traced to the close ties US ENGLISH has had to anti-immigrationist concerns.

1. THE FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS ADVOCATED IN THIS STUDY. Language attitudes and language behavior are governed both by perceptions of sociolinguistic reality and sociolinguistic reality itself (Giles and Johnson 1987:72). Stotland and Canon's (1972) framework of cognitive social psychological principles is useful for exam-

ining how perceptions of reality affect the dynamics of groups who engage in formulation of language policy. An individual observes variation along concrete dimensions such as language. Once awareness of such a dimension is acquired, the individual is said to have acquired a conceptual dimension. The individual learns to associate variation between conceptual dimensions, developing a schema. Instantiations of schemas include such ideas as attitudes, beliefs, and intentions. The information processing efficiency that schemas facilitate reduces the anxiety that arises when incoming information represents change. For this reason, schemas are cherished and maintained, even in the face of compelling evidence to the contrary.

A schema of fundamental importance is the association between similarity and liking. If an individual is similar then one feels comfortable with that person, because of the assumption that the two have other traits in common. The actions of that person are perceived to be more predictable, and one consequently plans one's own actions confidently, which enhances the sense of competence. One may assume, for instance, that people who speak a different language variety, differ in other unknown ways. The tendency, therefore, is to associate with individuals who behave linguistically in a similar manner. A primary reason for joining a group comprised of individuals similar to oneself with respect to fear of change is to safeguard self-esteem. Once an individual is a member of a group, he or she will be motivated to help it obtain its goals. If a suggestion for action on the part of a member is perceived to further the goal attainment of the group, then it will be accepted. Such suggestions have been labeled "leadership acts" (Stotland and Canon 1972:530), and leadership is conferred by group members upon the one who performs such acts. The leader is then ascribed higher status, and correspondingly the members' sense of competence increases. Critically, for the present analysis, subsequent information supplied to group members by the leader is accepted as reliable and true. The leader can thus consolidate status by presenting information in such a way as to confirm beliefs already held by the members. The leader is then in a position to maintain the schemas held by the group. A leader who helps a group define and attain its goals is effective. This effectiveness enhances the self-esteem of the group's members and the leader is allowed to remain in his or her position.

Fishman points to this very issue of decreased self-worth as the underlying motive behind US ENGLISH:

... there is a seriously wounded self-concept involved insofar as mainstream America yearns for "English Official/English Only" to salvage its sense of propriety and law and order. Otherwise, why the imperviousness to the data on language maintenance and language shift with respect to our non-English-mother-tongue population? Why are facts so useless in the discussion? Why is it so irrelevant to "English Official/English Only" advocates that with the exception of isolated and self-isolated groups, such as certain Amerindians, the German-speaking Old Order Amish and Hutterites, the Russian-speaking Old Believers and the Yiddish-speaking Khasidim (none of whom would be in the least bit affected by "English Official/English Only")

legislation), all other ethnolinguistic minorities in the USA lose their ethnic mother tongue fairly completely by their second or third generations of encounter with American urban life (Fishman 1988:131).

Fishman recognizes that the issue is political, and US ENGLISH has elaborated a political answer to the fears of apparently millions of Americans of linguistic change and consequent uncertainty. An assault on the status of the symbol of the group is an assault on the collective self-concept. There are, moreover, clearly negative practical consequences of change: discrimination by minorities against members of the majority who are unlucky enough to find themselves in an ethnic enclave, ineffectual bilingual educational practices to which majority group children are subjected, and eventual economic disenfranchisement of a large number of law-abiding, English-speaking Americans who feel they deserve security. It is away from this fear that the leadership of US ENGLISH purports to take its membership

2. THE LEADERSHIP OF US ENGLISH: A FAÇADE OF EXPERTISE. US ENGLISH has changed leaders often, and following the framework above, the reason for this instability seems to be that the leadership indeed has not represented the interests of the group, as they once had. Initially, one of the founders, S.I. Hayakawa, semanticist and US senator, perceiving that the supremacy of English was threatened by the increasing proportion of speakers of other languages in the US, crafted the English Language Amendment (ELA) in 1981 (Tatalovich 1995:11-12). Hayakawa joined John Tanton, a Michigan ophthalmologist and founder of the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), to form US ENGLISH in 1983 (Tatalovich 1995:10). Hayakawa's ELA constituted a leadership act which resulted in thousands with similar views joining the new organization. These new members shared language behavior (use of English), behavior towards language (financial and political support of English), and attitudes and beliefs about language. Early in the group's history, the focus was simple and clear: end fears of national disunity by promoting official English.

Gerda Bikales, identified in *US ENGLISH Update* as executive director and editor of the newsletter from 1983 to 1987 (US ENGLISH 1987b:5) described the effectiveness of the organization's leadership in this way: "... the despair about helplessly standing by while our language erodes is gone. We have identified thousands of enthusiastic supporters of English, we have learned to work together . . ." (US ENGLISH 1985j:3). The members in effect conferred leadership upon the founders, who in turn disseminated information which confirmed the members' views. These early years marked by apparent unity of purpose, notable electoral successes, and stable leadership, gave way to a period of instability in the leadership. Constant changes in leadership were both symptomatic and a cause of problems in US ENGLISH, which was striving for credibility as a source of expert opinion on language policy. Early numbers of the newsletter included folksy little articles that provided tidbits of information about the number of phone calls in the

world made in English (60%), the date of the first official English declaration (1362), and poked fun at commercial efforts to accommodate multilingualism (see US ENGLISH 1984k:4; US ENGLISH 1985r:3), features which reinforced the idea that the leaders of the organization were like the membership at large, proud of English and reasonably but not overly concerned about encroachment from language rivals. This was an important step in establishing expertise. If individuals see that they are generally similar to an expert, then they will be more likely to accept pronouncements by that expert (Stotland and Canon 1972:394). The newsletter editors contributed further to the appearance of expertise by giving it a more professional look in 1988. This semblance was enhanced by professionally written articles in which an assortment of facts and figures to support a variety of claims was cited.

The fact that one of the founders of the organization was a linguist (S.I. Hayakawa was a well-known semanticist) is constantly mentioned. That a scientist of language helped found the entire movement also appears to lend the organization credibility. Hayakawa's is only one of many names associated with US ENGLISH. The newsletter also has brightened its image over the years by publicizing an impressive list of luminaries who are on the board of advisors. The names of 21 members of the board of advisors first appeared during the third year of publication of the newsletter (US ENGLISH 1985o:4), and included such figures as Walter Annenberg, Jacques Barzun, Saul Bellow, Alistair Cooke, Norman Cousins, Walter Cronkite, and Gore Vidal. Cracks began to mar the façade of leadership and expertise that US ENGLISH so carefully erected. The instability of leadership is reflected by the changing titles and leaders over the life of the organization. The position of executive director is a case in point. Gerda Bikales was the executive director of the organization from 1983 until 1987 (US ENGLISH 1987d:7), at which time Linda Chavez was ushered in as president, a position which had not before existed, and Bikales was then listed as founding director (US ENGLISH 1987g:1). Chavez lasted little more than a year (US ENGLISH 1988d:6) after which she resigned along with Tanton, as reported by acting chairman Stanley Diamond (Diamond 1988:2). Kathryn Bricker took over as executive director, resurrecting the position, which she held until June 1990. In August 1990, Bricker was reported to have been "promoted" to the position of special assistant to the chairman, Stanley Diamond, and Ron Saunders was listed as executive director. Saunders' reign lasted until around February 1992. After a year-long hiatus, the newsletter reappeared, dated Spring 1993, with the same volume and number as that of the previous year's January-February issue. Mauro Mujica was listed as chairman of the board at that time, and for the first time since January-February 1985, Stanley Diamond's name did not appear as a member of the leadership.

Just as leadership has been unstable, so too has the organization's board of advisors undergone numerous changes. The impressive roster first appeared in the third year of its existence (US ENGLISH 1985o:4). Ironically, even as the newsletter's headlines trumpeted its most important victory, the passage of Propo-

sition 63 in California (US ENGLISH 1986b:1), Norman Cousin's name was suddenly missing from the board of advisors (US ENGLISH 1986g:8). Gore Vidal's name disappeared from the board a few months later (US ENGLISH 1987h:7). Another major defection from the board was in evidence a year later, when the presidency of Linda Chavez abruptly ended and Walter Cronkite's name vanished from the board of advisors (US ENGLISH 1988b:6). Advisors who left the board were quickly replaced by others. Arnold Schwarzenegger lent his clout to the movement shortly after Vidal's defection (US ENGLISH 1987f:5) and Charlton Heston began to act on behalf of the organization as an advisor after Cronkite's resignation (US ENGLISH 1989:6). As of Spring 1993, the advisors numbered 26, half of whom were members of the original board.

The notable instability in leadership was an indication that there was disagreement about the goals of the organization. Underlying the language issue there were broader concerns, but just what they were could not be easily discerned in the pages of the newsletter. The organization has polled the membership on numerous occasions, but its use of slanted questionnaires cannot provide accurate information, and the leadership cannot respond as effectively as it otherwise might (US ENGLISH 1993a:5). Indeed, during the first ten years of publication, the newsletters cites only one poll of the membership, which reveals that of over 8,000 members who responded to a survey, 86% agreed with a statement that Puerto Rico should move to an English based government if it becomes a state (US ENGLISH 1990d: 4-5). An important clue as to the motives of US ENGLISH leaders and members is provided by Tatalovich (1995:50), whose research into patterns of voting in official English referenda shows that support of ELA is simply political:

English-Only may be a reaction against Spanish-speakers who (except for Cubans) vote Democratic. It is a ploy by Republicans to exploit another "social" issue to attract southern, working-class, and Catholic voters from their traditional allegiances to the Democratic Party. The California battle over "English-Only" was closely tied to a backlash against bilingual education, spearheaded by then U.S. Senator S. I. Hayakawa (Republican, California), and other research has found that 95% of the legislative sponsors of official English laws in Arizona, California, and Colorado were Republican.

Tatalovich concludes that racism plays an insignificant role in official English voting patterns.

While those who vote for official English measures may not be motivated by racism, anti-immigrationism, or xenophobia, there are many who argue that the leadership of the organization is motivated precisely by such issues. At the outset of his investigation of US ENGLISH publications, Donahue observes that

An examination of the policy statements, newspaper editorials, and other supporting documents distributed by this group shows that they represent a body of political opinion which has seized on the official language issue to conceal a wide variety of reactionary and destabilizing sentiments which threaten

the ethnic group autonomy of America's political minorities; the most interesting feature of the group and its activities is that thus far US ENGLISH has succeeded through distributing an odd mixture of shallow information, misinformation, tangled logic, illogic, and xenophobia. (Donahue 1985:100)

Donahue decries the observation in *US ENGLISH Update* that bilingual ballots are "deeply resented by earlier immigrants who had to learn English" as a "skillful and yet strident kind of rhetorical assault," (Donahue 1985:102), and calls the US ENGLISH description of the monopoly of bilingual education "purposely deceptive," exposes "scare tactics," and claims that US ENGLISH fact sheets are "an attempt to spread falsehoods among the least informed and the most gullible of our electorate" (Donahue 1985:103). Donahue ends his exposé with a Marxist analysis, according to which US ENGLISH embodies both a bourgeois strategy for exclusionary social class stabilization and a proletarian strategy for usurpatory moves. This analysis makes sense in the context of the early eighties right-wing renewal and economic recession during which US ENGLISH was born. Politicians in the early eighties publicized middle-America's fears of being alienated in an increasingly non-English-speaking society (for example, see Symms 1985), and led the charge against what they perceived to be an institutionalized bureaucratic defense of minority language rights in government, at the voting booth, and in school.

A similar political analysis of language policy development is presented by St. Clair. Although St. Clair focuses on the legitimization of a language standard, the political sociolinguistic process described can be applied just as well to the question of official English:

Each nation has an obligation to imbue its citizenry with a respect for its civic culture. This use of political socialization channels social behavior in line with the mainstream values of a nation. It teaches the populace to work within the system provided by the government, to respect its laws and to abide by its dictates. What is interesting about this phenomenon is that language standardization is one of the more dominant instruments for inducing common social expectations among its citizenry. This sociopolitical process need not be thought of as sinister. However, the more conservative a nation becomes, the more it uses language as a constraint against social, political, religious and ethnic minorities in order to deny them full access to the mainstream culture (St. Clair 1982:165).

St. Clair's arguments can be applied to the case of US ENGLISH inasmuch as its activities are intentionally aimed at ostracizing speakers of minority languages. By this reasoning, US ENGLISH is not simply advocating policy that will favor the majority constituency it claims to represent and that will benefit the state by saving millions of dollars currently wasted on bilingual ballots and education, but rather that also opposes client-directed language services such as interpretation in courts, hospitals, and other public institutions.

Readers of *US ENGLISH Update* would certainly not read that the ulterior motives of some leaders of US ENGLISH were indeed racist and anti-immigra-

tionist. Underlying the departures of certain key figures was a fundamental disagreement between them and the racist element in the organization. Crawford (1989) notes that the FAIR organization founded by Tanton received \$370,000.00 in the early 80s, while Tanton was director, from a eugenics foundation by the name of The Pioneer Fund, whose first project in 1937 was to support a sterilization program in Nazi Germany, and which continued to support racist research and policy through the 80s. Padilla (1991:39, 41-42) summarizes the disagreements that led to the exit of some of the organization's most famous boosters, and presents evidence that Cousins, Chavez, and Cronkite all left because they disagreed with the racist, anti-immigrant undertone of the organization's campaigns. US ENGLISH, not surprisingly, has not wanted to identify itself as an organization with anti-immigrant or racist connections. Not once in the first ten years of publication did the editors of the newsletter inform the membership of the formal ties between their group and racist or anti-immigrant concerns. Quite to the contrary, Stanley Diamond, as acting-director, declared the racist writings of the recently departed chairman, John Tanton, to be "completely unrelated to US ENGLISH" (Diamond 1988:2), and Karen Bricker, another executive director of the organization, rejects charges that anti-immigrationism, nativism, xenophobia, and racism are among the secret reasons for the organization's support of official English (Bricker 1989:4). Another supporter of official English claims that national language policies in education that foster a continued dependence on languages other than English disadvantage minorities and prevent them from entering a workforce which is becoming progressively more service-based and technologically oriented (Graham 1990:10). Graham explicitly deplores racial and sex discrimination and notes that those Spanish-speakers who report no difficulty with English do not suffer employment discrimination. Graham argues for a "liberal pluralism," in which individual rights are paramount, and rejects the corporate pluralism. Graham's conclusion is that declaring English the official language will strengthen "the nation's great unifying and equalizing forces—our common schools, our common franchise, our common language" (Graham 1990:26).

Despite convincing and passionate denials by US ENGLISH and its supporters that their movement has racist and anti-immigrationist roots, there are deeper motives that underlie the desire to make English official. The insecurity of the founders of the group which led to the ELA proposal has proved to be far deeper than fear of "linguistic tension" (see Tanton 1988:4). Indeed, the basic motivation for some of the leaders US ENGLISH is the perceived danger of sociopolitical disintegration. While certainly some of the members share these deeper apprehensions, it is likely that not all of them subscribe to the "hidden agenda" with the same degree of conviction as some of the leaders have, and the departure of many board members is further evidence of this. Nevertheless, the mild remedies proposed formally by US ENGLISH cannot stem the tide of bilingualism. Instead, more draconian measures would be required: complete elimination of Spanish mother-tongue

education, a ban on the use of government funds for dissemination of any government documents in Spanish, and barring use of Spanish in public places would go much further in alleviating the widespread fear of shift away from English in America. US ENGLISH has repeatedly denied that it wishes to support such extreme measures, yet constantly refers to foreign-language activities, often without comment by the editorship. The reader is left to conclude that English is being encroached upon, and the implication is made that American society should do something to protect itself. The newsletter serves to confirm individually held schemas about language, however inaccurate, that arise out of fear of change and a decreasing sense of self-competence. The massive increase in membership of US ENGLISH over the years legitimates the role it has taken to safeguard sociopolitical security by influencing large-scale language policy. In return, the membership receives a newsletters that confirms the notions that US Spanish-speakers are now refusing to learn English and that bilingual education is a significant reason for this attitudinal shift. At the same time, the newsletter consistently calls for policy that is ostensibly aimed only at government operations and language status, while hinting all the while that what the organization really wants is to eliminate public use of Spanish altogether.

3. US ENGLISH ON LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE AND SHIFT. The depiction in the pages of *US ENGLISH Update* of the maintenance of mother tongues other than English and the shift to English is perhaps the single most important issue, since a refusal to learn English by Spanish speakers would be interpreted as a strike at the very heart of national unity. If members' fears that Spanish-speakers are refusing to assimilate are confirmed in *Update*, then the organization may be able to rally members to the official English cause. *US ENGLISH Update* has presented a number of articles on the issue of language maintenance that reveal what the editors wish to convey. An early *Update* item reported favorably on a study of the assimilation of Cuban-Americans:

The survey . . . indicates that compared to their elders, the younger generation of Cuban-Americans reported more social contacts with non-Cubans, more use of English, less interest in returning to Cuba, more sympathy for the plight of Black Americans (Update 1984c:6).

That article is one of several that highlight shift to English and one of very few which features the assimilation of Spanish-speakers to the national language. Most report on Asian individuals who do well in school or in spelling bees. Far more frequent are articles that underscore the growing danger that failure to assimilate represents. In a column called "As Others See Us . . ." *Update* reproduces the following comments of July 14, 1984, by Terry Coleman, correspondent for England's Manchester Guardian, according to whom

[the United States] just might become in 20 years the largest Latin American country on Earth. . . . In New York, whole parts of the city are Hispanic. The

advertisements on some buses and many subway cars are in Spanish. Many young taxi drivers do not have enough English to understand without difficulty where you want to go. . . . What then is different about this new wave of immigrants? The difference is that by and large they are not adopting English as their native tongue, or many of them, even learning much English at all (US ENGLISH 1984a:6).

The editors of the newsletter and Coleman cannot be easily faulted here. They characterize the observations by Coleman as "impressions," thus sparing themselves the criticism that they are presenting opinions as fact. To a certain extent, what Coleman says is also true. It is a well-known fact among linguists that adult immigrants never adopt English as their native tongue. This is referred to in the literature on second language acquisition as the issue of completeness (see Schachter 1990). While it is true that many recent immigrants do not adopt English at all, only a comparison of the proportion that adopt English in the present with the proportion adopting English in the past can answer accurately the question of slowing language shift to English. Without any substantive argument, the author, and the *Update* editors, by quoting an "expert," succeed in creating the impression that Spanish speakers are now refusing to assimilate.

The citation of opinions by other writers is an effective way for US ENGLISH to make some of its bolder claims without having to take direct responsibility for them. The following quotation of a July 1985 statement by Henry Grunwald, editor-in-chief of *Time*, Inc., on the subject of language maintenance illustrates this tactic:

Immigrants who know English as one of the great unifiers of America will never be reconciled to those others—many Hispanics for instance—who refuse to accept English fully, thus creating an ominous dual culture in many parts of the US (US ENGLISH 1985t:2).

Grunwald's comment is similar to Coleman's in that he avoids substantiation of his claims. By using the word "many," Grunwald excludes the important issue of proportion. Indeed, many immigrants do not learn English, but there are many immigrants and many Americans. How many is many? Is Grunwald referring to percentages or absolute numbers? What is full acceptance of English? Must the immigrant never again speak his or her native tongue? Although Grunwald answers none of these questions, his statement and its publication in *Update* lead uncritical readers to conclude that our country faces the threat of massive refusal to learn English.

US ENGLISH has also used its own spokespersons to address the issue of maintenance and shift. US ENGLISH's controversial chairman, John Tanton, penned the following comments regarding speakers of Spanish:

The immigrants come from shorter distances, and modern communications will make it easier to keep up their home ties. Many of the countries of origin share a common Spanish language heritage. The newcomers typically congregate in a few areas, building up communities large enough to function in their native language, without having to learn English.

In addition, we now have readily available Spanish language television and radio, with frequent broadcasts from the home country. Businesses are providing more and more services in Spanish. Add to this the government sponsored and enforced programs such as bilingual education and balloting, and affirmative action benefits for select ethnic groups. All this reinforces the tendency to cling to the original language and culture, and to reject the great American melting pot.

This is why things are different today, and why US ENGLISH is needed to help defend and promote our common language, the most powerful bond unifying our highly diverse populace into a nation (Tanton 1985:6).

Tanton's description supplies a significant verification of the means and ends of US ENGLISH with respect to protection of English and specific restriction of Spanish. The inaccurate characterization of shift by Spanish speakers to English is presented under the guise of expertise in sociolinguistic matters. The threat of a mass of recalcitrant Spanish speakers thus established, US ENGLISH support of constituency-based language policy exclusively favoring English is motivated, as well as the opposition of US ENGLISH to bilingual education and clientele-based *ad hoc* policies.

Under closer scrutiny, Tanton's arguments are untenable. With respect to the relationship between geographical distance and language maintenance, Bills, Hernández-Chávez, and Hudson report that in New Mexico, a state with one of the highest proportions of Spanish speakers

The Distance variable . . . appears to be a kind of surrogate measure of integration into mainstream US society. Its associations with language shift are important, though clearly intertwined with other phenomena such as urbanization, immigration, and socioeconomic status. Proximity to Mexico, immigration from Mexico, and insulation from the mainstream tend to favor retention of Spanish while their opposites conspire to promote shift to English, particularly in the urban setting (Bills, Hernández-Chávez, and Hudson 1993:29).

Tanton, in his characterization of the language behavior of US Spanish speakers, fails completely to mention that any shift occurs at all, and in any case overstates the relationship that obtains between distance and maintenance. Even in El Paso, Texas, a city right on the border with Mexico where 67% of the 515,000 residents are of Spanish origin, Teschner reports that

many Spanish-speaking residents can indeed speak English, and—in keeping with north-of-the-border societal rules of speaking—almost always do so with Anglos without having to be asked. . . . English is the language which one expects to predominate in education, government and higher commerce . . . (Teschner 1990:18).

These samples of scholarship on Spanish maintenance and shift in the US are mentioned only to demonstrate that even in areas where there are high concentrations of Spanish speakers, knowledge of English and shift from Spanish are widespread. The exceedingly complex situation of Spanish in the US cannot be reviewed

here, but it should be obvious that Tanton leads readers to conclude incorrectly that Spanish speakers have recently changed their minds and are now refusing to assimilate. What is more important than the inaccuracy of Tanton's statement in and of itself, is the fact that this high-ranking member of *US ENGLISH* supplies a key corroboration of the hypothesis that the primary motive for the ELA is the misperception that Spanish speakers, specifically, are refusing to learn English.

US ENGLISH provides more evidence of the putative shift to Spanish by quoting John Hughes, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist who was Assistant Secretary of State from 1982 to 1984:

Spanish is a second language for many, the sole language for some. The 1980 census indicated that 23 million Americans do not speak English at home; by the year 2,000 the total number of non-English-speaking Americans will be just under 40 million. Nobody questions their right to maintain the language and culture of their ancestry, or the desirability of doing so. What language people speak at their own dinner tables is no business of government" (Hughes 1985:4).

Hughes may have meant simply that there will be 40 million individuals whose first language is other than English. This possibility notwithstanding, the prediction he in fact made and published has very little probability of becoming reality.

In 1990, of the 230,445,777 persons in the US who were age five or over, 31,844,979 spoke a language other than English at home (US Bureau of the Census 1993). Of these, 13,982,502, or approximately 6 percent of the US population reported not speaking the English at the level 'very well.' The census bureau reports that over 75 percent of nonnative English speakers claim to speak English at least 'well' (Barringer 1993:A18). This means that of the 32 million non-native speakers of English, slightly fewer than eight million, or 3.5% reported speaking English less than 'well.' Even someone who reports that his or her English is only 'fair' can hardly be considered a non-English-speaker, so this method of determining acceptable English proficiency is conservative. Nonetheless, even using this conservative estimate, 96.5% of the country speaks English 'well' or 'very well.' Even though the figure of 8 million people in the US who do not speak English 'very well' is misleading and is certainly not the same as the number of speakers who cannot speak any English, it can serve to make a point in response to Hughes' prediction. The number of nonnative speakers of English who speak the language less than 'very well' would have to increase by over 32 million or about 400%! Since most of these new non-English-speakers would be immigrants, the current rate of immigration would have to triple after having reached the highest level in 70 years during the eighties. Even experts adorned with the Pulitzer prize are capable of gross misuse of language data to further a political cause.

Having established the impression that language minorities, and Spanish speakers specifically are refusing to learn English, *US ENGLISH Update* drives home the point that language differences lead to political chaos. Tanton labels this phenomenon "linguistic tension," and throughout the first decade and in nearly every

issue of the organization's newsletter it is referred to constantly with a variety of synonyms. References are made to *language battles*, *language bias*, *dialect gap*, *communication barrier*, *language barrier*, *perils of translation*, *fragmenting of America*, *rising intergroup tensions*, *bilingual fiasco*, *displacing English*, *increased ethnic identification*, *anti-English resolutions*, *language tornado*, *anti-English commitment*, *unintelligible profs*, *language dispute*, *English opponents*, *language conflict*, *language police*, *bilingual battle*, *language controversy*, *language ban*, *ELAs under attack*, *thorny [language] issue*, *Quebec separatism*, *language policy under attack*, *Canada's splitting French/English headache*, *lawsuits against ELAs*, *language division*, *language segregation*, *language gap*, and *language differences*. Using vocabulary that frequently evokes the idea of hostilities, US ENGLISH successfully associates bilingualism and fear, which confirms the feelings of many members that their linguistic security is threatened.

The theory that language division leads to tension and violence reaches its zenith in the pages of *US ENGLISH Update* when the newsletter attributes a riot to language differences:

Angry residents in the Mount Pleasant area of the District struck out after an Hispanic man was wounded by police. Residents claimed continual mistreatment by police and accused the city government of failing to serve the needs of the Spanish-speaking community. Rioting intensified because residents and officials could not communicate, leading to increased tension and the spread of misinformation (US ENGLISH 1991d:2).

The executive director emphasizes the language factor, claiming that "without a coherent policy recognizing English as the common language, basic institutions necessary to democracy may disintegrate" (Saunders 1991:3). Official English is thus defended by raising the prospect of interethnic conflict. Except for one article that documents language shift and assimilation to the US society by Spanish speakers, every article on the subject of language maintenance that appears up until the end of 1985 in *Update* asserts that shift is not occurring. Furthermore, the reader of *Update* would conclude that the widening ethnolinguistic rift will lead inexorably to violence without the protection of official English.

The question arises as to why US ENGLISH resorts to politicians, eye doctors, and actors who portray action heroes to build their case for the ELA. US ENGLISH has come to distrust the objectivity of sociolinguists. The *International Journal of the Sociology of Language (IJSL)* published an entire issue devoted to the official English question. The *Update* editor notes that Marshall "speculates on the likelihood of violence in the streets if laws were promulgated to interfere" with language rights. The editor further notes that the entire issue was an attack on ELA and that only Bikales' contribution defended the idea "that an immigrant nation needs a common language to foster cohesion and unity" (US ENGLISH 1986e:5). Bikales, in a response article included in the *IJSL* issue on ELA, claims that Marshall's work "is essentially an annotated political tract, masquerading as a

scholarly monograph. It is a defense of *a priori* personal convictions that a multilingual society is a net social benefit" (Bikales 1986:77). A few admittedly politically charged speculations do not negate the validity of what is an informative and well-researched scholarly work. Bikales freely admits up front her political position vis-à-vis ELA, and the reader is explicitly invited to question her objectivity. She is quite right in denouncing scholars who allow a political agenda to taint their work. They can no longer convincingly call themselves scientists. This does not, however, excuse US ENGLISH from the charge that much of their argument in favor of an English-only policy is based on misperceptions.

The impression that US Spanish speakers are clinging to Spanish more than ever and turning away from English is misleading. The situation is more complex. An analysis of Census Bureau data reveals that adult Spanish-speaking language loyalty dropped between 1980 and 1990, but shows that youth language loyalty increased. At the same time, rates of long-term limited English proficiency among all US Spanish speakers have actually declined during the same period (see Gynan 1997). US ENGLISH boosters, however, focus only on the fact that there are more Spanish speakers in the US, and indeed they have "embraced the new figures as evidence to bolster their cause" (Barringer 1993:A18), but the statistics welcomed by US ENGLISH are merely increases in nonnative count and density, which are not good measures of language maintenance (see research summary in Bills, Hernández-Chávez, and Hudson 1993:21).

Those that fear that an attitudinal shift of the part of Spanish-speaking youth in favor of Spanish maintenance may interpret the figures cited above as an ominous sign that supports US ENGLISH contentions; however, Hakuta and D'Andrea demonstrate that language shift among youngsters is a robust phenomenon, even in a linguistically isolated Hispanic enclave in Northern California, and that attitudes favorable to Spanish do not predict a lack of proficiency in English, but instead significantly predict a choice to use Spanish. In other words, Spanish speaking adolescents are quite capable of learning English well while maintaining Spanish. This directly refutes Tanton's assertion that such isolation leads to Spanish maintenance and failure to learn English. English proficiency among Hispanic youth is a function of age of arrival to the United States, time of residence in the United States and whether parents were born in Mexico or the United States (Hakuta and d'Andrea 1992:72-73). The simplistic assertions published in the pages of *US ENGLISH Update* fail completely to represent adequately the complexity of language maintenance and shift by US Spanish speakers.

4. US ENGLISH ON BILINGUAL EDUCATION. The increase in numbers of US Spanish speakers, the even greater increase in US Spanish speaker population density, and the historic increase in Spanish-speaking immigrant density during the 70s and 80s formed a significant part of the sociolinguistic context in which US ENGLISH was born. The fear of a shift away from English that is expressed

in the pages of *US ENGLISH Update*, is one of the basic reasons for the organization's consistent opposition to bilingual education. For the reader not familiar with the different types of bilingual education, *US ENGLISH Update* supplies a glossary of terms used to describe programs for limited English proficiency (LEP) children, which is adapted and summarized in Table 1. *US ENGLISH Update* articles express opposition especially to transitional and maintenance bilingual education. Their position on different kinds of immersion, as expressed throughout the years in the newsletter, is somewhat more ambiguous.

TABLE 1. *Types of Bilingual Education*
(adapted from US ENGLISH 1985:8; Teschner 1990:5-6).

TYPE OF PROGRAM	DESCRIPTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACH
Submersion	Regular classes in English with no special program
ESL submersion	Regular classes in English with supplementary ESL
Structured immersion	Classes in English modified to be comprehensible to LEP students
Bilingual immersion	Classes in English modified to be comprehensible to LEP students, supplementary classes in the mother tongue
Transitional bilingual education	Instruction in mother tongue; supplementary ESL, regular English instruction phased in, Spanish instruction phased out
Maintenance bilingual education	Instruction in mother tongue continued after the student is capable of functioning in English; regular English instruction phased in; child's cultural heritage taught as integral part of curriculum

US ENGLISH holds that the evidence from research strongly favors immersion over bilingual education programs that include substantial mother tongue components. Cavazos, Diamond, and Porter present the following explanation of why transitional bilingual education (TBE), ineffective as it is, continues to be supported by so many educators:

Because of the discrimination traditionally experienced by language minority children, many educators, lawyers and legislators were easily convinced that any program using only English language instruction must be inadequate and any program that taught the children in their native language must be not

only equitable but superior. This view gained acceptance among the well-intentioned (Cavazos, Diamond, and Porter 1990:590).

Cavazos, Diamond, and Porter then explain that a native-language component is not needed in order for an ESL program for LEP children to be successful.

In a 1990 flyer US ENGLISH claims that it "supports *all* special programs that quickly teach English to LEP students, including English or native-language based classes" (US ENGLISH 1990a:2). In this regard, the group "encourages the study of native languages and cultural appreciation for all students." Secondly, it "opposes the fundamental shift of bilingual education from a transitional program to teach English to one that emphasizes the maintenance of native languages." Finally, US ENGLISH "believes that negative effects result from the long term segregation imposed on LEP students in many native-language based programs."

The US ENGLISH position is analyzed by US ENGLISH consultant Gary Imhoff, who organizes his work along an educational, socio-cultural, and political dimensions. With respect to education, Imhoff attends to linguistic results, cognitive benefits, enhancement of self-esteem, and teacher training, claiming that the Berlitz method, which he also calls immersion, produces the highest degree of acquisition of English most efficiently. Cavazos, Diamond, and Porter state that immersion "promote[s] the ability to think in the new language and to use it for academic and real life purpose, rather than focusing on translating from one language to another and memorizing grammar rules" (Cavazos, Diamond, and Porter 1990:591). Cavazos, Diamond, and Porter conclude that immersion is an effective technique, but that it cannot be used when TBE is in place. Imhoff writes that "US ENGLISH has always supported the reasonable use of native languages to demonstrate the school's acceptance of and openness to the student" (Imhoff 1990:50). Imhoff singles out TBE as ineffective and summarizes research that demonstrates the same (Imhoff 1990:52). US ENGLISH has paid particular attention to the scholarship of Kenji Hakuta, who is described by the organization as an advocate of TBE and maintenance models. US ENGLISH enthusiastically agrees with Hakuta's assessment that TBE is not very effective (Imhoff 1990:52; Diamond 1990:586).

In the area of the relationship between cognitive flexibility and bilingualism, the organization dismisses the results of Hakuta's research, which indicate that bilingualism is positively related both to cognitive flexibility and sociolinguistic competence. US ENGLISH concludes that Hakuta simply confounded two variables in his study:

What Hakuta found is a well-known phenomenon—the child who is doing well in one language will also do well in second language acquisition, and will also perform well in other areas of intellectual development. The study appears to have picked out the more academically apt pupils, and attributed their better performance in various cognitive areas to their bilingualism, rather than intelligence (US ENGLISH 1985i:6).

Having dispensed with Hakuta's scholarship in this way, the editorial reaffirms the opinion that bilingual education is ineffective. Imhoff similarly dismisses Hakuta's research:

And his own study of bilingual children in New Haven has found that they have a greater underlying reading ability and nonverbal logic than monolingual children. But Hakuta achieves these results by defining as "bilingual" only those children who are equally and completely fluent in both languages. His definition determines his result, and his findings prove nothing more than that intelligent kids are smart kids (Imhoff 1987:4).

US ENGLISH thus stakes out the position that Hakuta's defense of the cognitive value of bilingual education is invalid because he confounded the variables of achievement and intelligence.

Another commonly cited issue in bilingual education is that of self-esteem. Imhoff supports structured immersion, but allows for bilingual immersion because "young children can feel isolated, punished, picked on, or discriminated against when they are forbidden to use the only language they know" (Imhoff 1987:50).³ Expressing a different point of view, US ENGLISH executive director Bricker claimed that "states now wave the banner of self-esteem, claiming that this new emphasis will help reduce drop-out rates, teen pregnancy, and other social problems" (Bricker 1990:3). Bricker reports on the failure of the movement, and asserts that the "self-esteem doctrine was used to institutionalize bilingual education. Unfounded theories and biased ideologies were presented as hard facts, and viewed as the necessary steps to provide an equal education to minority students who would otherwise be left out in the cold" (Bricker 1990:3). Bricker calls for reform that leads to better achievement and as a consequence of success in ESL, enhanced self-esteem.

US ENGLISH is also interested in the issue of the training of bilingual education teachers. Imhoff, in discussing a suit in California against the Berkeley Unified School district, lists requirements for bilingual education teachers as including courses on the structure of the languages involved, culture, sociology, psychology, general linguistics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, ESL methods, and assessment techniques. Imhoff describes teachers who meet such requirements as "Renaissance scholars," implying that the credentials are excessive (Imhoff 1990:59). Diamond alludes to the same issue, stating that "freeing districts to employ non-certified instructors for language remediation programs will ease the strain on districts" (Diamond 1990:585).

As for the socio-cultural dimension, Imhoff identifies a theory of cultural plu-

³ Imhoff refers to structured immersion as 'immersion,' and to bilingual immersion as "structured immersion." The context of his comments clearly indicates that he believes "structured immersion" to involve mother-tongue education. The liberty has been taken to change his terms to those used by US ENGLISH and in this article.

ralism, which "demands not just that bilingual education be used in schools but that bilingual education be one element of what is essentially a cultural revolution: the creation of a bilingual—or multilingual—nation" (Imhoff 1987:56). Imhoff specifies that "in this sense . . . US ENGLISH finds itself not just unconvinced of the claims of bilingual education but in direct opposition to it" (Imhoff 1987:57).

Finally, Imhoff interprets the political dimension as one in which Hispanic leaders have turned away from the immigrant-assimilationist paradigm to embrace an identity as oppressed minority who is entitled to compensation. The underlying motive, according to Imhoff, is political advantage:

The political demand for bilingual education does not rest upon any demonstration of its efficacy or its desirability for Hispanic students. It finds its source and its power in the fact that bilingual-education programs in public schools provide a power base for local and national ethnic organizations (Imhoff 1987:58).

Imhoff goes on to explain that those leaders who call for bilingual education do so because they wish to maintain their base of political power by keeping Spanish speakers ethnically isolated. This presumed political posture, according to Imhoff, constitutes a challenge to national unity, and is therefore opposed by US ENGLISH. Cavazos, Diamond, and Porter echo the sentiment that Spanish speakers are using bilingual education to bolster their political struggle by affording a quasi-official status to the language. Cavazos, Diamond, and Porter use Hakuta's writing to back up the argument (Cavazos, Diamond, and Porter 1990:592). Paradoxically, Imhoff responds to the same research by Hakuta by concluding that "unfortunately, it contributes little to the current political debate over bilingual education" (Imhoff 1987:4).

With respect to the linguistic outcomes of bilingual education, research does not provide overwhelming support for either TBE or bilingual immersion (BI). As an example from this huge area of inquiry, Teschner, in a thorough review of bilingual education, presents district-wide data from El Paso, Texas that demonstrates quite convincingly that TBE is not as effective as BI in imparting English skills in reading, language, and math (Teschner 1990:26). These results do not constitute a ringing endorsement for BI either, because third and fifth grade reading scores of BI students still lag far behind those of the district as a whole (Teschner 1990:16-17). Teschner points out that BI has a Spanish component, and in view of the fact that even this approach produces students of substantially lower than average reading ability, is tempted to recommend structured immersion (SI), with no Spanish component (Teschner 1990:24), but Teschner resists temptation and conditionally endorses BI. Cavazos, Diamond, and Porter's analysis of how non-English mother-tongue education gained such wide support, and why immersion is rejected with such force, perhaps provides interesting hypotheses regarding the sociocultural and political significance of bilingual education; however, it

was not merely discrimination against language minority children that lead to mother-tongue education. Submersion proved to be an ineffective approach to teaching English. Cavazos, Diamond, and Porter are right in pointing out that using an English-only structured immersion approach does not necessarily lead back to the ineffective programs of the past, but fail to mention that poorly run bilingual immersion programs often prove to be no better than submersion or TBE.

The facile US ENGLISH dismissal of research linking cognition and bilingualism is based on the incorrect assumption that intelligence and the ability to acquire language are correlated. This entire issue is beyond the scope of the present article, but the reader is referred to Sasaki (1993a, 1993b) for an exhaustive analysis. Suffice it to say that Sasaki's careful statistical methodology establishes the independence of general intelligence, language aptitude, and language acquisition. In any event, US ENGLISH presents no specific findings to refute Hakuta's research. The organization seems unwilling a priori to admit that bilingualism confers any benefit whatsoever on the individual who has that competence, fearing perhaps that such an admission would compromise their stand against bilingual education. The organization, in taking this stand, confuses success of bilingual education with the more general benefits of bilingualism.

Hakuta has stated quite categorically that TBE is ineffective (Hakuta 1986:219). His finding that bilingualism is correlated with cognitive flexibility is unrelated to his position on the effectiveness of a given technique. If a given approach is ineffective in imparting fluent bilingualism, then of course the cognitive benefits of bilingualism will not be observed. Conversely, the cognitive benefit Hakuta discovered implies nothing about the effectiveness of a given technique of bilingual education. Furthermore, the students Hakuta singles out for analysis have acquired both languages as a result of naturalistic acquisition, and not formal training in school. Hakuta's results speak to the benefit of bilingualism *per se*, and say nothing about bilingual programs.

It is puzzling why US ENGLISH should be so interested in refuting this claim. After all, if cognitive benefits accrue to those Spanish-speaking Hispanic students who are afforded the opportunity to participate in effective and efficient ESL programs, this should be simply more evidence in favor of the need to provide such programs. Teschner's research shows that even when a relatively small portion of the elementary curriculum is devoted to mother tongue instruction, as is the case in BI, children perform in Spanish, their mother tongue, nearly as well as TBE students in all areas (Teschner 1990:12), so students in bilingual immersion who succeed in acquiring English, do not lose their mother tongue, and will enjoy the cognitive benefits of bilingualism identified by Hakuta. There is no evidence to indicate that children who fail to acquire English are less intelligent. Not only does Sasaki's thorough and meticulous research debunk the claim that intelligence and language acquisition are related, both Hakuta (1992) and Teschner (1990) look to the issue of availability of English in the extracurricular environment to explain

observed proficiency in students. It is precisely because many El Paso LEP students have nearly no access to English outside of class that Teschner leans toward recommending total structured immersion, so at least the students will hear as much English as possible in class. It is important to keep in mind the fact that US ENGLISH claims to want successful English programs, and insists that certain approaches are ineffective, but even out of expediency, it does not behoove US ENGLISH to insist that higher intelligence facilitates language acquisition, because that factor would weaken their argument that successful ESL depends on the method being used. If US ENGLISH accepts that intelligence is a minor factor and method a major factor in predicting student success in ESL, then it must be prepared to revisit its rash rejection of Hakuta's and others' research.

The US ENGLISH position on the issue of self-esteem is, as it turns out, far more related to the facts than its understanding of the cognitive impact of early coordinate bilingualism. Teschner sums up the research findings in El Paso in following way:

The lower level of TBE enthusiasm . . . is especially striking, since the TBE all-Spanish-in-the-content-areas curriculum was clearly intended to produce precisely that effect: positive identification with the home language's cultural heritage (Teschner 1990:14).

In this regard, Bricker's estimation that children derive positive self-esteem from achievement might be a more reasonable hypothesis to be tested at a later date.

The last aspect of educational aspects covered here concerns teacher training. Budgets are tight everywhere, and one can certainly understand why untrained teachers are pressed into service, but both Imhoff and Diamond give the impression that teachers who deal with LEP students need little specialized training. Imhoff reveals his lack of expertise in the area of teaching methods when he equates the Berlitz method with structured immersion, and the certification credentials that Imhoff ridicules as those of a Renaissance scholar are actually fairly typical of any foreign language teacher program at the university level. Some of the requirements that Imhoff throws in the hopper, such as sociology, psychology, and English literature, are part of nearly any undergraduate's general curricular requirements in social science and humanities. Fortunately, Cavazos, Diamond, and Porter, sound reason:

The immersion approach requires trained teachers who use English, in simplified form at first but gradually more sophisticated, to teach the school subjects of math, science, and social studies (Cavazos, Diamond, and Porter 1990:591).

This description is entirely in line with the current understanding of child second language acquisition and how it can be facilitated best. It is no easy or cheap solution, and while the teacher need not speak the mother tongue of the children in such a program, he or she really does need to be able to understand it in order to be able to acknowledge and respond to questions from children. The present au-

thor has supervised FLES programs for nearly ten years and has witnessed first-hand the success of this approach. US ENGLISH should not buy or forward the argument that little or no training is necessary for content-based ESL (structured immersion) in the elementary schools. To support the use of no special method and untrained teachers to teach our LEP children English goes against the very purpose of US ENGLISH, because the result will be a large number of students who continue to be LEP.

With respect to the sociocultural dimension, recall that Imhoff opposes those who wish to create cultural pluralism in the United States. Here, Teschner's analysis provides a valuable counterpoint. Teschner reluctantly endorses bilingual immersion after a great deal of deliberation, as a way of responding realistically to the sociolinguistic situation in El Paso, where the majority of the population is actually Spanish-speaking or descended from Spanish speakers. Even the most zealous proponents of either side of the issue cannot do much to change the ethnolinguistic identity of hundreds of thousands of people, or on the other hand to create cultural plurality. El Paso is already bilingual and bicultural. English- and Spanish-speaking neighborhoods are often separated by many miles. One can very successfully live in either an English-speaking El Paso, a Spanish-speaking El Paso, or a bilingual El Paso. A given approach to language education can only go so far in changing the fundamental sociolinguistic characteristics of a city, much less a nation.

The last dimension Imhoff analyzes is the political one. US ENGLISH has published statements by Hispanics who speak in favor of bilingual education, and more generally in favor of bilingualism. The institutionalization and officialization of Spanish is especially irksome to US ENGLISH organizers, and this proposed change in status is often mentioned by bilingual education supporters. Regarding a National Association for Bilingual Education meeting, it was reported in *Update* that "[m]ost speakers expounded at length on the need for, and the eventuality of, a multilingual, multicultural United States of America with a national language policy, citing English and Spanish as the two 'legal languages'" (US ENGLISH 1984i:3). An earlier issue of *Update* lists several conference sessions which indicate incontrovertibly that NABE is a highly politicized organization (US ENGLISH 1984g:3). US ENGLISH, by quoting leaders of Spanish-speaking communities extensively, shows that bilingual education is more than a method of teaching English; it is a politically significant endeavor which raises the status of Spanish. If US Spanish is institutionalized, it gains more status, which represents a sociostructural invasion into the traditional realm of English, which is exactly what US ENGLISH fears.

Imhoff's political analysis of the immigrant versus the minority orientation of Hispanics comes up short. That the all US Spanish speakers are immigrants who should be in the process of assimilating is simplistic and inaccurate. Imhoff conveniently omits mention of the Mexican-American and Spanish-American wars, which netted the US nearly the entire southwest as well as Puerto Rico. Despite the fact that the present community is clearly more immigrant in character than

not, the significance of the non-immigrant presence of Hispanics cannot be set aside merely because it is politically convenient to do so.

The position of *US ENGLISH* on bilingual education has netted it many enemies and severe criticism has been leveled at the organization. Imhoff appears to be baffled by this negative response:

Why should stating that a common language is vital to the unity of this nation or supporting English as that common language evoke such irresponsibly extreme reactions? Why does promoting English proficiency as a necessary prerequisite for economic and social advancement in the United States provoke such hysteria, such irrational fears? Why should the attacks on the proponents of English be so personalized and so vicious? (Imhoff 1990:50)

The answers to these questions lie in part in the pages of *US ENGLISH Update*, where the tone is often not so much analytical as emotional.

The coverage of the bilingual education issue in *US ENGLISH Update* has evolved from an often inflammatory denunciation of non-English, mother-tongue education to a far more subdued and professional approach. In an early article on the topic of bilingual education, Hayakawa "denounced as illogical and misguided" a US Department of Education college grant application printed in Spanish (*US ENGLISH* 1984d:2). In the next issue, it was reported that Hayakawa "decried the growth and entrenchment of the bilingual education bureaucracy at public expense" (*US ENGLISH* 1984l:1). Subsequently, the *Update* editor described the term, 'limited English proficiency' as part of "the abominable jargon of bilingual education" (*US ENGLISH* 1985p:8). These examples communicate the strident and derisive tone of many articles in *US ENGLISH Update* that deal with bilingual education, more characteristic of a political, mud-slinging debate than of academic discourse, and not conducive to reasoned response from the other side.

Another reason for the angry reply of bilingual education advocates to *Update* articles, is that some clearly leave the impression that the submersion technique (no ESL for LEP students) is acceptable. Even though Imhoff gives the nod to structured immersion, he emphasizes a study (see citation of Rossell in Imhoff 1990:52) and a court ruling (see citation of Jensen in Imhoff 1990:60) which leave the impression that submersion is an acceptable approach to the challenge of educating LEP students. In an *Update* article, the editor states that the

bilingual teacher shortfall, estimated to be in the range of 70,000 teachers nationally, is totally artificial. The teachers are needed only because laws in various states say they are. There is no compelling pedagogical reason for teaching immigrant children bilingually. There are other ways to teach youngsters who don't know our language—as demonstrated by many generations of immigrants educated in our public schools in more traditional ways (*US ENGLISH* 1985h:6).

The traditional way was often no method at all. Teachers in grade school simply did as best they might to accommodate the needs of children. One need only speak, as

the author of the present article has on many occasions during the last twenty years, to Hispanics who were educated in the fifties to learn that they were routinely slapped and spanked for speaking Spanish in school or on the playground. It is no wonder, therefore, that bilingual education advocates should react angrily to statements such as the one above that casually imply that going back to the way things were would be an acceptable alternative method of dealing with LEP children.

5. US ENGLISH ON LANGUAGE POLICY. A US ENGLISH Fact Sheet (included in US ENGLISH 1985e:4) may be used to define what its stated primary goal is. The English Language Amendment (ELA) sets forth the broad principle that "English is the language of the United States, and enjoys a special status in American society." This statement affirms the common bond among members of the group. The special status which is referred to is conferred by the ELA. The fact sheet provides a list of intentions that underlie the language of the ELA, which states that English is official, and that congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation. (For a legislative history of the ELA from 1981 to 1985, see Marshall 1986:23-39.) According to US ENGLISH, ELA would establish English as the official language of federal, state and local governments, prevent government-mandated multilingual postings, and make English a condition of statehood. US ENGLISH states that ELA would not prohibit private, religious, educational or commercial use of Spanish. ELA would not prohibit use of English for public convenience or safety. Finally, ELA would not prohibit short-term transitional bilingual education.

There are three language policy models, developed by Cloonan and Strine, which prove to be critical to the analysis of the official US ENGLISH position. *Constituency-based* policy is determined by legislation, is comprehensive, highly formal, directed at the language population, and is shaped by pressures from the majority or a specific constituency. *State-benefit-based* policy is also determined by legislation, is formal and comprehensive, is directed at the benefit of the state, and represents a response to governmental concerns. Finally, the *cliente*-based language policy is determined by administrations of governmental agencies, is not comprehensive but rather ad-hoc and informal, and is shaped by administrative standards and pressure from citizens for services (Cloonan and Strine 1991:271). The motives of the ELA are consonant with constituency and state-benefit language policy. US ENGLISH consistently states that it does not call for elimination of cliente-based, administrative language.

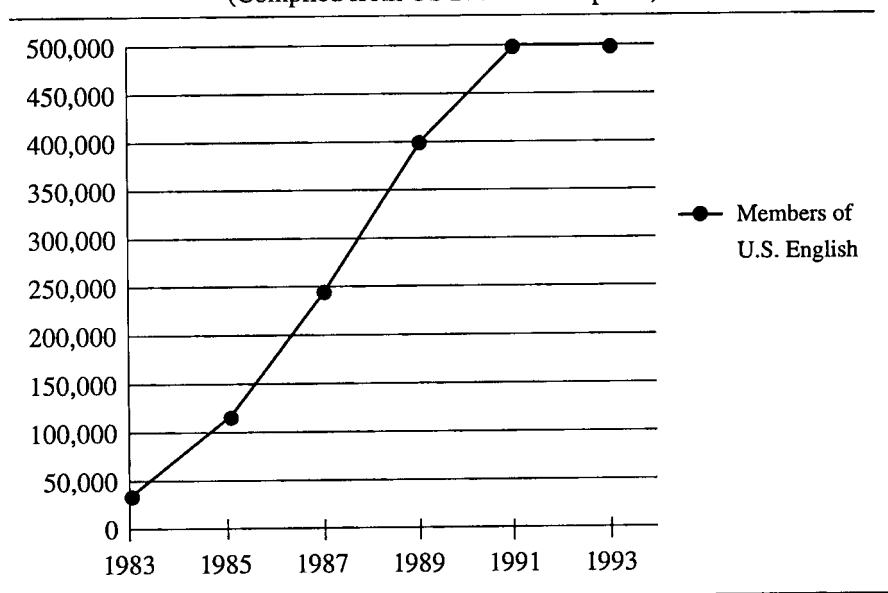
5.1 CONSTITUENCY-BASED LANGUAGE POLICY. The ELA, which is supported by US ENGLISH, has a variety of versions, but the language common to all specifies that English shall be the official language. An *Update* editorial explains that this means that "English is the language of this country, and thus enjoys a high level of legal recognition and protection" (US ENGLISH 1986d:3). Just what legal recognition is, remains unspecified in that editorial, but may be found in other US

ENGLISH writings. One of the best clues to the motives behind ELA is provided by the The Language of Government Act of 1990 (US ENGLISH 1990b:7). The act would have made English the official language of government, would have forbidden denial of government services or access to the government because a person speaks only English, would have prohibited "reverse linguistic discrimination" against speakers of English, and would have provided for the right to sue to enforce the act. The act would also have required effective bilingual education and forbidden the government to require use of any language other than English. On the whole, this act is clearly an example of constituency-based language policy, much more defensive of English than aimed toward limiting minority language use.

The organization has documented the opinions of the constituency that it purports to represent by virtue of the hundreds of thousands of members they have amassed and through a variety of polls. As can be seen in Figure 1, data for which are approximately year-end, the growth of the organization throughout most of its first ten years was quite steady as they added approximately 50,000 members per year. It was not until the publication of *US ENGLISH Update* was suspended for a year that the increase in membership leveled off.

US ENGLISH executive director Saunders provided further evidence that the membership drive was intended to demonstrate the existence of a significant constituency:

FIGURE 1. *Growth of US ENGLISH, 1983-1993*
(Compiled from US ENGLISH Update)



US ENGLISH gains access to state and federal politicians because we have significant numbers of members in their districts. In 1991 we plan to add 100,000 members to our rolls, demonstrating that ours is a mainstream issue and not one of isolated special interest groups (Saunders 1990:6).

This statement helps clarify the fact that US ENGLISH membership figures alone are considered evidence of a significant constituency that supports official language legislation.

TABLE 2. *Levels of Support for Official English
Reported by US ENGLISH.*

YEAR POLL REPORTED AND LOCATION IN US ENGLISH UPDATE	STATE OR COUNTRY IN WHICH POLL CONDUCTED	PERCENT SUPPORTING OFFICIAL ENGLISH	LEVEL OF OFFICIAL ENGLISH SUPPORTED
1987c:1	Connecticut	91%	national
1987d:7	Texas	70%	state
1987a:3	Florida	86%	state
1988c:4	Colorado	63%	state
1988e:3	Arizona	61%	state
1990d:4-5	Missouri	68%	state
1990c:5.	California	73%	state
1991e:7	United States	78%	national

US ENGLISH also documented the opinions of its constituency by publishing the results of a number of polls. The figures presented in Table 2 show that official English at the state level enjoys majority support throughout the country, and that official US ENGLISH also is popular nationwide. Just what people think they are supporting when they agree to official English is not clear from these polls, but the framework of analysis developed here indicates that they want linguistic security.

US ENGLISH showed the importance of official English to its constituency by pointing out the threat that other languages represent at the individual level:

Last fall, we reported on two American-born, English-speaking citizens who were denied jobs cleaning offices in Miami because they spoke no Spanish. . . . The case is believed to be the first in which an English-speaking applicant's failure to speak Spanish is the basis of a discrimination charge. . . . [The janitorial service] company recently agreed to settle the case . . . (US ENGLISH 1985u:7).

US ENGLISH left it to the reader to extrapolate from this information that this was the first step taken to defend the individual's language rights, and a sign of the challenges to individual security that remain. Another article presents yet one more sign that multilingualism can represent personal danger:

In Delaware, a man convicted on four counts of unlawful sexual intercourse with a 13 year old girl, may be acquitted and thus avoid a possible 80 year sentence, because of allegedly inaccurate translating during his trial.

The defendant, who raised no objection to the quality of translation while the trial was being conducted, is arguing that a court interpreter used a Cuban dialect of Spanish that was different from his own Puerto Rican dialect, causing him to misunderstand some questions (US ENGLISH 1988a:2).

This example provides strong evidence to back up the hypothesis that lies at the heart of this entire analysis: the official English movement can be traced back to deep-seated fear for personal security of the unknown. Raising the specter of a LEP Puerto Rican deviant confirms the fears of the most insecure, thus strengthening their allegiance to the group. Allegiance was especially needed when this piece was published. Linda Chavez and John Tanton, it will be recalled, departed from the organization during a storm of controversy over the relationship between US ENGLISH and racist, anti-immigrationist activities. Their names disappeared from the roster of leaders the very next issue. It is a particularly remarkable reflection of the leadership's insecurity that the editors of *US ENGLISH Update* should plumb the very lowest depths of fear-mongering at that critical point in the organization's history. Ironically, that may have also been when they were furthest removed from the interests of their constituency.

Another way in which the United States is seen to be able to protect the majority constituency's interests is to require some English for citizenship. US ENGLISH does not include this as part of its general mission, but the implication in articles on the subject is that it supports such measures:

There is also a requirement in the [Simpson-Mazzoli immigration reform bill of 1984] of some knowledge of English and of American history and government, or of enrollment in a course of study of these subjects, as a condition for amnesty for illegal aliens.

This requirement has been seen as onerous in some quarters. In a Miami News article, Manny Diaz, president of the Miami-based SALAD organization (Spanish-American League Against Discrimination) and a lawyer, asserted that the requirement could be thrown out in court because it is unequal application of the law: "It is not imposed on anyone else who goes through the normal channels to immigrate," Diaz explained (US ENGLISH 1984f:3).

US ENGLISH does not declare itself in favor of this measure, preferring instead to present the information without comment. The editor does, however, refer to the "fate" of the bill, implying sympathy with the content thereof. Such a position is consistent with the organization's policy of protecting the linguistic security of the majority constituency and guaranteeing that new Americans join that constituency.

US ENGLISH documents another language challenge that affects the security of the majority constituency, national defense:

The Army has been providing some opportunities for learning English, and about half of the soldiers identified as limited in English have taken short term remedial courses. Last September, the Army started routine testing of language skills of all recruits whose home language is not English. Those who don't meet minimum standards are now sent to the English Language Center of the Defense Language Institute in Lackland, Texas where they receive up to 24 weeks of intensive language training. Failure to learn enough English results in separation from the service (US ENGLISH 1986a:4).

This report alone may appear not to document a threat to national security, but in the article title this ESL activity is referred to as a struggle with soldiers who do not speak English. This conjures up the image of division in the ranks, and that there are soldiers who know no English at all. The extent of the soldiers' limited English proficiency (LEP) is not identified. The number of LEP soldiers involved is never mentioned, and the number who fail to improve is not provided. With no specific documentation, US ENGLISH conveys the message that policies requiring English guarantee Americans national security. Five years later, US ENGLISH in this regard, quotes its chairman Stanley Diamond as saying that "[i]n combat, a commanding officer cannot take the time to translate orders into many languages. He may find himself with no one left to command" (US ENGLISH 1991b, 2). This statement confirms the idea that official English is vital to the safety of the majority constituency.

5.2. STATE-BENEFIT LANGUAGE POLICY. *State-benefit*-based policy is also determined by legislation, is formal and comprehensive, is directed at the benefit of the state, and represents a response to governmental concerns. One easy way to measure state-benefit is in terms of money, and US ENGLISH opposes outright or publicizes a number of programs involving bilingualism or multilingualism that cost money. In just about every case of state-benefit-based language policy, US ENGLISH relates the policy to the larger, constituency-based policy of providing the nation security through a common language.

Most of the efforts of US ENGLISH on behalf of state-benefit-based language policy are directed against bilingual ballots. As the organization describes the case, "[i]n 1975, with little public discussion and virtually no input from the American public, amendments mandating foreign language ballots were added to the Voting Rights Act. . . . Only Spanish, Native American, and Asian-Pacific languages are targeted in the law" (US ENGLISH 1984b:4). In their case for repeal of this policy, US ENGLISH cites deep resentment by earlier immigrants, describes the act as symbolic of official recognition, claims that it dissolves traditional bonds between English and citizenship, that it is unnecessary, and that it is costly. In another state-benefit language policy issue related to the cost of multilingualism to government, US ENGLISH opposed the proposed federal subsidy of a national Hispanic university (US ENGLISH 1984j:5-6) and publicized the millions of dollars and difficulties involved in court translation in Los Angeles (US ENGLISH 1985n: 4).

Another language-related government policy identified by US ENGLISH concerned the use of languages other than English in the workplace. The newsletter

headlined the reelection of a New Jersey mayor who issued orders to city hall employees to speak English on the job, except when assisting visitors in need of translators, and who was denounced by several Hispanic organizations (US ENGLISH 1984x: 5). Along the same lines US ENGLISH reports that three municipal court judges in the Los Angeles area, in response to complaints from office workers ignorant of Spanish who thought they were the object of derogatory conversations, asked that court employees speak only English on the job, except when assisting the non-English speaking public. This order was appealed by Spanish-speaking court clerks (US ENGLISH 1985l: 2). Laws with content similar to the language of government act would benefit the state by allowing government to restrict language use. These cases are interesting in that they provide further evidence that language policy is developed partly in response to fear of the unknown.

US ENGLISH identified developments that represented a threat to the status of English in government. It highlighted a court ruling that English is not a requirement for service in public office (US ENGLISH 1985q:5). Another *Update* article described as an amazing encroachment of Spanish the publication in English and in Spanish in Journal of the House of Representatives of an invocation on the occasion of the anniversary of Cuba's liberation in 1902 (US ENGLISH 1985f:4). The US ENGLISH position on state-benefit-based language policy has been fairly straightforward. Its opposition to bilingual voting, use of Spanish by government workers, and the use of Spanish in publications documenting governmental proceedings has been predictable from its desire to ensure that the presence of other languages does not place undue burden on the government. Underlying this pragmatic justification of such policy has been a desire to protect the constituency from institutionalization of Spanish.

The ballot issue is an example of this double justification. While bilingual voting may indeed be unnecessary, the fact that in response to a city of Los Angeles survey, only 758 people had requested voting materials in Spanish (US ENGLISH 1986f: 3) shows that even in a city that has one of the largest Spanish-speaking populations in the country, the provision of bilingual ballots has thus far constituted no threat to the bonds between English and citizenship. Here the motivation is financial, but underlying this concern is the fear that a new constituency with different allegiances will develop if the policy is allowed to continue.

5.3. CLIENTELE-BASED POLICY. US ENGLISH has repeatedly published statements that make it clear that it does not intend to restrict *ad hoc* policies designed to provide language services. Imhoff, for example, describes as wild, silly, unfounded, and disproved charges that US ENGLISH

wants to eliminate health, safety, and emergency services for non-English speakers; to eliminate court interpreters for non-English speakers; to end foreign-language education in schools; to make non-English public signs illegal; to rename cities and streets that have non-English names; to eliminate business advertising in languages other than English; and so forth (Imhoff 1990:61).

These denials notwithstanding, *US ENGLISH Update* editors devoted a considerable amount of attention to precisely these kinds of policies in nearly every issue over the first five years of publication. Tanton's 1985 comments revealed that not only did he, as one of the founders of US ENGLISH, favor the establishment of a constituency- and state-benefit-based language policy favoring exclusive use of English, but that as well he is opposed to client-based *ad hoc* policies that do allow the use of other languages. Tanton implied that the fact that Spanish television and radio broadcasts and business services were being provided to clientele was exacerbating the problem of Spanish language maintenance, threatening the unity of the country. Despite statements to the contrary by US ENGLISH, at least this member of US ENGLISH was opposed to clientele-based *ad hoc* language policies that allow for the use of Spanish. And Tanton certainly is not the only one. US ENGLISH writers Bikales and Imhoff also blame clientele-based policies for encouraging language maintenance in a 24-page monograph on the subject (US ENGLISH 1985v:1). After 1988, however, no more articles on this subject appeared in *US ENGLISH Update*.

Articles about every kind of clientele-based language policy mentioned by Imhoff did appear in *US ENGLISH Update* until 1988. These documented services in other languages for health and safety, broadcasting, telephone, advertising, business-customer relations, and even lottery tickets. The articles were almost always presented without comment. On the subject of safety, US ENGLISH publicized the response to a poll question: "Dade County should spend money to print official brochures and signs in Spanish and English," to which 24% of non-Latin Whites, 49% of Blacks, and 78% of Cubans agreed (US ENGLISH 1984c:6). Along this line, US ENGLISH reported on the expansion of government Spanish-language services in New York (US ENGLISH 1987h:5). Periodically, *Update* used to publish an item called "Life in these bilingual United States," similar to the humorous Reader's Digest column. One such item was about health care, which reported that San Francisco General Hospital Women's Health Clinic was seeking Latin and Asian bilingual labor coaches. Added was the more sobering detail that training for volunteer bilingual labor coaches was provided at the clinic, for a fee of \$30 (US ENGLISH 1985m:2).

In the area of business, *Update* provided a wide range of details. The following excerpt was included on advertising:

[S]tores report that advertising alone is no longer enough to compete for Latino dollars. To serve that customer, they're printing credit applications in Spanish, placing bilingual directories in stores, setting up toll-free telephone lines for catalogue orders, publishing Spanish catalogues or catalogue guides and creating personal-shopper services for Latino customers, an informal survey of national and regional retailers found (US ENGLISH 1985g:3).

Referring to "multilingual" Flushing, in Queens, NY, *Update* reported on a booklet that has shopping phrases translated into Spanish, Chinese, Korean, and Hindi

(US ENGLISH 1985r:3). The need for a business response to interethnic communication challenges was documented in an item on an agreement reached between Coors and a coalition of Hispanic organizations (US ENGLISH 1985b:4). Likewise, the Holiday Inn was reported to offer a ten week course in Spanish for managers, to help them communicate with employees (US ENGLISH 1985c:4).

Another area to which considerable space is devoted was broadcasting. US ENGLISH supplied a humorous view of the challenge:

The successful Soviet émigré comedian Yakov Smirnoff, was recently asked by a reporter whether he spoke English before coming to the United States. His reply: "No, I learned it by watching television in New York. I watched for about three months, until I realized it was a Spanish station" (US ENGLISH 1985k:2).

In the same vein, *Update* reported on the development of the Second Audio Program (SAP):

At least one television station, KTLA, in Los Angeles, is already experimenting with the potential of the new technology by broadcasting the ten o'clock news and "The Love Boat" in Spanish. As prices drop for sets with SAP, it is expected that more stations will offer regular English programs with a Spanish soundtrack (US ENGLISH 1985s:5).

In a more focused article, *Update* revealed its intent by publishing a story on its own attempt to reduce the number of stations broadcasting in Spanish (US ENGLISH 1986h:2), and on FCC's denial of license renewal to Mexican-controlled TV programming (US ENGLISH 1986c:2). Telephone service in Spanish and the publications of directories in Spanish were noted (US ENGLISH 1985a:7). US ENGLISH found this particular issue no laughing matter and issued a complaint before the California Public Utilities Commission against Pacific Bell for forcing English speaking rate payers to subsidize the Spanish language service (US ENGLISH 1988b:6).

Client-based language policy is one area in which US ENGLISH has repeatedly denied being interested. If the organization's supporters wonder why it is accused of favoring restriction of language services, it need look no further than these examples, which convey the idea that such provision goes beyond the call of duty. The contradiction between the stated clientele-based policy and the implied clientele-based policy notwithstanding, the logic of this opposition to client-based policy is clearly explicated: the organization believes that such services retard development of English proficiency, which in turn increases the vitality of Spanish. This chain of reasoning leads eventually to a viable alternative for a national language and threatens the authority of English and English-speaking individuals.

5.4. Public Use of Spanish. US ENGLISH has also denied that it wishes to restrict the use of Spanish in public. Nevertheless, the organization made a num-

ber of references in its early years to this particular domain of language use. In response to a Florida poll question, that "[p]eople who live in the United States should be fluent enough in English to use that language in their public dealings," US ENGLISH reported that 95% of non-Latin Whites agreed, 90% of Blacks, and 81% of Cubans (US ENGLISH 1984c:6). US ENGLISH quotes politicians as well, who in calling for ELA, have pointed to the use of Spanish in public and the fear it produces as evidence for an amendment (US ENGLISH 1985d:4). The US ENGLISH constituency and the politicians who serve it frown upon public use of languages other than English. Finally, despite repeated statements to the contrary, US ENGLISH has directly expressed opposition to religion in Spanish:

We do not believe that today's immigrants are less able to learn our language than were those who came earlier—provided, of course, that they are not discouraged from doing so by schools that teach and by bishops who preach in Spanish (US ENGLISH 1984e:4).

Although US ENGLISH cannot develop a legal policy to restrict public and religious use of Spanish, the organization itself has expressed this goal.

6. CONCLUSION. At the outset of this analysis of the publications of US ENGLISH, it was hypothesized that a general fear, shared by many Americans and developed on the basis of personal observation and hearsay, of change brought by Hispanics to the United States was the driving force behind the policies proposed by the organization. This hypothesis has been confirmed at every level of analysis. Regarding the knowledge of US linguistic diversity which underlies the formal and informal language policy proposals of US ENGLISH, this article has revealed that the newsletter has published a combination of fiction and fact. The most distorted view is of language maintenance and shift, the result of personal observations of both founders and members of US ENGLISH. In light of recent immigration trends, these mistaken conclusions are not surprising.

The perception of certain politicians and US ENGLISH that Hispanics are turning away from English, found repeatedly in the pages of US ENGLISH, simply does not hold up under objective scrutiny. While immigration has brought more Spanish-speakers to the US in recent years, and young Spanish speakers in the US are now more positive about maintaining their ancestral language, long-term limited English proficiency among Spanish speakers has actually dropped during the last decade. In light of the level of fear of Spanish-language generated violence and social disintegration that is maintained in the pages of *US ENGLISH Update*, the very high level of English proficiency among US Spanish speakers is an even more startling revelation.

The basis of the opposition of US ENGLISH to bilingual education is more sound, but the newsletter's early editors' penchant for innuendo has caused confusion and resentment. US ENGLISH now supports structured bilingual immer-

sion, that is, they ask for mostly graded ESL instruction for LEP Hispanic children but allow some education in the mother tongue and native culture of the child. This position is supported by many experts in the field. US ENGLISH over the years has undermined what could have been a reasonable position on bilingual education by politicizing the issue and even making the veiled suggestion that submersion is a reasonable alternative. In the last five years of publication, US ENGLISH has developed a far better focused message, which exclusively conveys the more judicious view. It will no doubt experience difficulty for years to come in attempting to overcome the legacy of support for atavistic and ineffective bilingual education policies which it once gave the impression of espousing.

US ENGLISH is frank about its defense of constituency-based and state-benefit-based language policy. It successfully defines a large constituency in favor of the general principle of official English language on behalf of the majority constituency. US ENGLISH uncovers and publicizes fear of change in the status of English, linking a degradation in the status of English to decreased national, economic, and individual security. US ENGLISH has emphasized repeatedly that it does not oppose clientele-based policies designed to provide language services to those who are LEP. This position is eroded by the legacy of the group's approach to this issue during the first five years of its existence. While defending *ad hoc* language policies to provide vital services, US ENGLISH consistently publicized and often ridiculed such services as evidence of the encroachment and expansion of Spanish into every conceivable aspect of public life.

The fact that at least informally US ENGLISH and its supporters wish that use of Spanish interpretation and translation in the courts, in health care, on street signs, on the airwaves, in advertising, by businesses, and in the church would cease is entirely predictable from the framework of analysis developed at the outset of this paper. Although there is simply no convincing evidence that English is in jeopardy as our national language, the myriad examples of change in national language behavior leave one with the impression that the United States will never again be as monolingual and monocultural as it once might have appeared to be.

The new emerging paradigm, appears to be that of immigrants and minorities who participate fully in the American linguistic and economic mainstream, but who at the same time reject the expectation that they deny the past, and instead embrace their rich heritage. While this celebration of diversity may leave a new generation feeling better about its past, it has also left a significant portion of the population confused and frightened of an uncertain future. *US ENGLISH Update*, with its legacy of distortion and misrepresentation of the complexities of US multilingualism, has only served to leave its constituency even less informed and more convinced about the existence of an imaginary enemy.

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